

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2022

Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Mr. Attorney General,

We write regarding the Department of Justice's response to the concerning increase in threats and violence against election workers.

As the 2022 midterm elections approach, and politicians continue to espouse incendiary rhetoric that endangers election workers, we ask that the Department of Justice take several steps to elevate the work of Election Threats Task Force. Specifically, we ask that:

- The task force increase its outreach to and communication with local election officials to enhance awareness of task force's work and resources;
- The task force proactively collaborate with local law enforcement to investigate threats against election workers;
- The task force collect robust data on threats against election workers to highlight trends and identify particularly dangerous environments;
- The task force hire a senior advisor with existing relationships in the elections community;
- The task force report on its progress to Congress prior to the 2022 midterm elections; and
- The task force engage the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to lead trainings on election administration for DOJ and FBI staff.¹

As you know, incidents of intimidation and harassment directed towards election workers, their families and those involved in different facets of election administration reached unprecedented levels in 2020.² A Reuters special report identified more than 800 threatening messages targeted at U.S. election workers and officials throughout the previous election year, including 100 that

¹ [Norden, L., Tisler, D., Howard, E., & Chowdhury, N. \(2022, March 31\). *How federal departments and agencies can help Secure America's elections*. Brennan Center for Justice.](#)

² [Guardian News and Media. \(2021, November 1\). 'It's been a barrage every day': US election workers face threats and harassment. The Guardian.](#)

could provoke prosecution.³ However, as of September 2021, these incidents have yielded few known arrests and convictions.⁴

Further, it is evident that the compounding emotional toll of these sustained attacks has instilled lasting fear and concern among election workers, pushing individuals to hire security or relocate their families. In March 2022, the Brennan Center for Justice published the results of an extensive survey of local election workers, revealing that one in six election workers have experienced threats and one in four election workers are concerned about being assaulted while working.⁵ It was also documented in this survey that 60 percent of officials are concerned that threats, harassment and intimidation against local election officials will make it difficult to retain and recruit election workers.⁶ Many election workers have already retired from their jobs or plan to exit before the 2024 election.⁷

We appreciate the Department of Justice's establishment of the Election Threats Task Force in July 2021 and know that protecting our democracy remains a high priority across the department. However, the Brennan Center's report highlighted that "nearly 80 percent of [election] officials think the federal government is either doing nothing to support them or taking some steps but not doing enough." The report also revealed that 90 percent of election workers are unfamiliar with the existence of this task force. Encouragingly, the report does demonstrate that 57 percent of workers felt safer upon learning about the task force.

Election workers are dedicated public servants. Despite concerted efforts to undermine their work, they collectively carried out the most secure election in American history in 2020.⁸ As we approach another major national election season, we hope the Department of Justice provides these workers with the full support of the Department of Justice against these threats.

Sincerely,



ANDY LEVIN
Member of Congress



JON OSSOFF
U.S. Senator

³ [Reports, S. \(2021, November 9\). Reuters unmasks Trump supporters terrifying U.S. election officials. Reuters.](#)


⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ [Local election officials survey \(March 2022\). Brennan Center for Justice.](#)

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ [Iza guirre, A. \(2021, June 13\). Exodus of election officials raises concerns of partisanship. AP News.](#)

⁸ [Joint statement from Elections Infrastructure Government Coordinating Council & the Election Infrastructure Sector Coordinating Executive Committees. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency CISA. \(n.d.\).](#)



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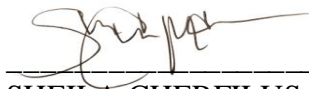
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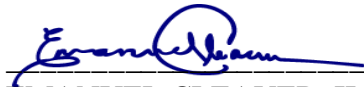
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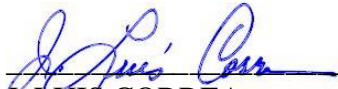
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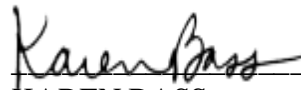
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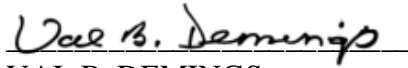
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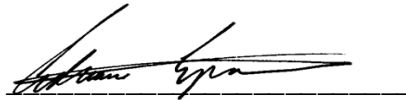
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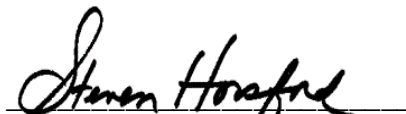

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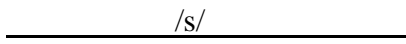

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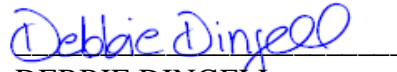

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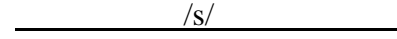

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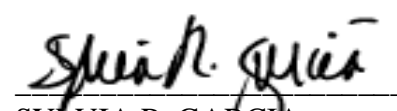

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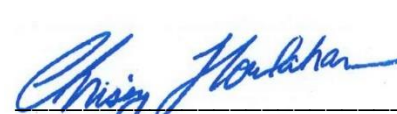

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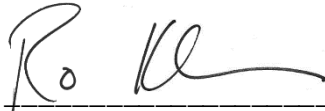

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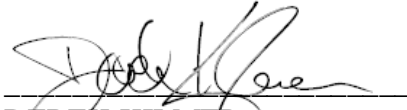

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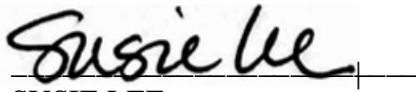
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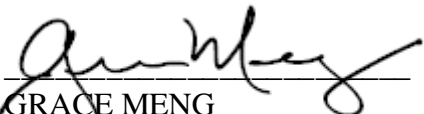
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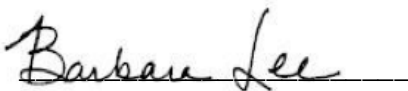
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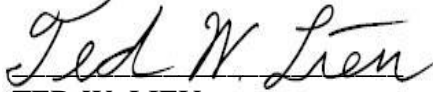
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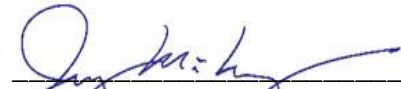
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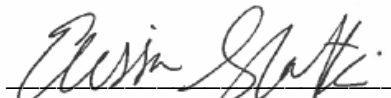
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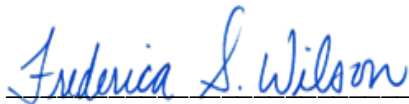
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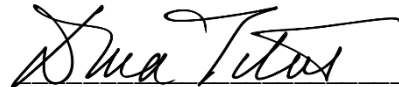
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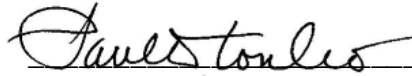
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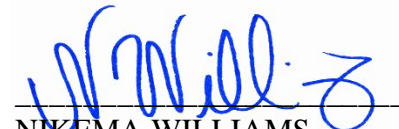
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